



GRAY DAVIS, GOVERNOR  
MARIA CONTRERAS-SWEET, SECRETARY OF BUSINESS, TRANSPORTATION AND HOUSING AGENCY  
JEFF MORALES, DIRECTOR  
DOUGLAS R. FAILING, DISTRICT 7 DIRECTOR

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2002



Inside Seven—a District 7 Edition of the CT News

## DOUGLAS R. FAILING APPOINTED NEW DISTRICT 7 DIRECTOR

By Jeanne Bonfilio

Formerly second in command of the day-to-day operations of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 7, Douglas R. "Doug" Failing has been named new District Director. Failing will now oversee the work of some 2,700 Caltrans employees covering Los Angeles and Ventura counties which boast some 615 free-way miles and 567 state highway miles.

"We have one Mission and one Vision and that is **Caltrans Improves Mobility Across California**," said Failing. "We are faster, better and more economical than anybody out there today. Caltrans is doing things no one is doing — in storm water, traffic management, new techniques and technologies for surveying and pavements, in many different methods that no one else in the nation is doing — no one else in the world is doing. And we're working under traffic conditions that exist nowhere else in the world. Nobody is better than Caltrans. And my vision as District Director is to continue to find ways to improve that because status quo is never good enough."

Tony Harris, Caltrans Chief Deputy, recently expressed his congratulations to Failing. "On behalf of the entire department, I congratulate Doug on his new appointment," he said. "As a former District 7 Director, I know both the unique challenges and satisfactions that come with this job. As the leader of one of the most intensely urban areas in the country, the District 7 Director will need to call upon a wide variety of skills. If it has to do with transportation, District 7 probably has a hand in it — from freeways to passenger and freight rail and sophisticated traffic management. With that challenge in mind, Doug and his staff are ready to continue the world-class level of work they have contributed in the past."

Since December 4, 2000, Failing was Chief Deputy under District Director Robert W. Sassaman. Before that position, he served as District 7's Division Chief for Project



Development where he managed a staff of some 470 engineers, surveyors and technical support staff responsible for delivering \$1.5 billion worth of transportation improvements in the two-county district.

Failing has also represented Caltrans on the Alameda Corridor Transportation Authority Governing Board. This major goods movement project includes a 20-mile rail distribution system to connect the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach with the distribution centers in downtown Los Angeles. It is estimated that the Alameda Corridor could result in employment growth of some 700,000 jobs in Southern California by the year 2020 and an economic output increase of about \$70 billion.

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I want to express my appreciation to the entire District for the support you have given me in my new position as District 7 Director, as well as for all the years I have worked with all of you. I am looking forward to the coming years as we continue to work together as a team, because you are the most important people to me — you, the Caltrans employees.

I have proudly worked for Caltrans pretty much my entire career. Many of you already know me, and I know so many of you because I love to walk around, I love to sit down with people, I love to chat and I love to just say “hi.” It gives me a chance not only to see the progress of our many important transportation improvement projects, but also to meet the people — you folks who are doing the work: the project managers, design engineers, all levels. Meeting people is so very important to me. I’ll call you if I have to, but if I can at all, I will come and see you in your office and what you’re up to and we’ll meet and we’ll talk, because that’s important to me.

I have been very pleased with what this District has accomplished. And we’ve done some really magnificent things. Caltrans is on the cutting edge of so many different fields. If it’s storm water, if it’s long-life pavement, if it’s nighttime Construction techniques, or nighttime Maintenance and work zone lighting techniques, if it’s traffic management — these are things that we do better than anyone else in the world. We are the best!

And we have Governor Gray Davis who has given us funding and a historic Traffic Congestion Relief Program — more funding than we’ve ever had before. We have an Agency Secretary, Maria Contreras-Sweet, who truly understands the importance of transportation and how it works in the overall economy of California and the role that we play; she is very supportive. And we have a Director, Jeff Morales, who gets it. He understands his role is to set overall policy, and to let us do our all-important jobs.

And we have one Mission and one Vision and that is **Caltrans Improves Mobility Across California**. The rea-

son I like it is that it’s simple and it’s based upon something that is very important in its core values. And it’s what we do best.

We accomplish this by operating under nine shared core values:

Integrity	Commitment	Teamwork
Partnership	Empowerment	Innovation
Customer-focus	Communication	Stewardship

These shared core values then led us to a series of five strategic goals. They are:

- **Safety.** Our goal is to achieve the best safety record in the nation — safety for our office employees, safety for our Maintenance workers, safety for our Construction workers, safety for our surveyors, safety for the rest of us who work in the field and safety for the traveling public. And that’s a big goal and it’s a heavy goal. It will be achieved because of you — the Caltrans employee. And it’s a part of everything that we do.
- **Reliability.** We have to make our transportation system reliable so that the traveler can reasonably predict what his trip is going to be; and also to reduce traveler delays due to roadwork and traffic incidents.
- **Performance.** Performance is what we’ve done so very, very well for so many years in delivering record levels of transportation improvements.
- **Flexibility.** Flexibility in transportation and making transit a more practical travel option is very important and it starts here. District 7 ranks number two in average ridership per vehicle coming into the Downtown area every single morning. You are all to be applauded for your participation.
- **Productivity.** We have to continue to improve the efficiency of the transportation system. Reliability is keeping it where it is; productivity is making it better so that the 45-minute trip can become a 40-minute trip, or a 30-minute trip. Those are the things we need to do.

These principals work because we work as a team. It’s more than Capital Outlay as a team, or Design as a team. It’s Design, Maintenance, Operations, Construction, Planning, Program and Project Management, Right of Way, Administration, Environmental, External Affairs and more. It’s all of us working together. Caltrans is the team, because so much of what we do involves every single one of those functions. And the Mission and Vision that we have, as good as it is, needs to get better. Because status quo will never work. We’ve always got to push to improve ourselves. And that’s me; that’s where I’m going.

# Long Beach Freeway Median Art Project Ceremony In Long Beach



California Business, Transportation and Housing Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet is shown (right) shaking hands with Long Beach Mayor Beverly O'Neill as she presents her with a median art mural from Caltrans. Assemblyman Alan Lowenthal (second from left) and Caltrans District 7 Director Doug Failing look on.

By Patricia Reid

A ceremony was held recently to announce the completion of the first-of-its-kind freeway art mural project on the Long Beach Freeway (I-710) in Long Beach. The art murals, depicting ocean waves and sea life, are located in the I-710 center divider (median) between Pacific Coast Highway (Route 1) and the San Diego Freeway (I-405). Caltrans District 7 Director Douglas R. Failing served as master of ceremonies for the successful event that received extensive media coverage. Nearly every television network ran a positive story and the *Los Angeles Times*, *Long Beach Press Telegram* and various local newspa-

pers also ran articles; and the story was also covered by KNX and KFI radio stations.

"This project is a first for Los Angeles County," said Business, Transportation and Housing Agency Secretary Maria Contreras-Sweet during the media event held at Cesar Chavez Park in Long Beach. "It is a relatively small project and yet it will make a big difference. It will beautify the gateway to Long Beach, the Queen Mary, the Aquarium of the Pacific and the city's other attractions."

Secretary Contreras-Sweet presented creative posters depicting the images that appear on the freeway median to Long Beach Mayor Beverly

O'Neill and to the Public Corporation for the Arts. Monica Murillo, Caltrans Graphic Artist, designed the beautiful posters and programs for the event.

"This freeway mural project is a good example of how Caltrans has taken on a whole new focus," added Secretary Contreras-Sweet. "We're trying to be much more sensitive to the fact that improvement projects we are doing are part of the community and we have an obligation to that community. Caltrans seeks out opportunities to initiate innovative projects like this. We plan to add art to transportation projects whenever

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Senator Betty Karnette, left, presents Kerry Zarders, a local Long Beach professional artist, with a special resolution honoring her for her original design of the Long Beach Freeway median art project.

## Median Art Project

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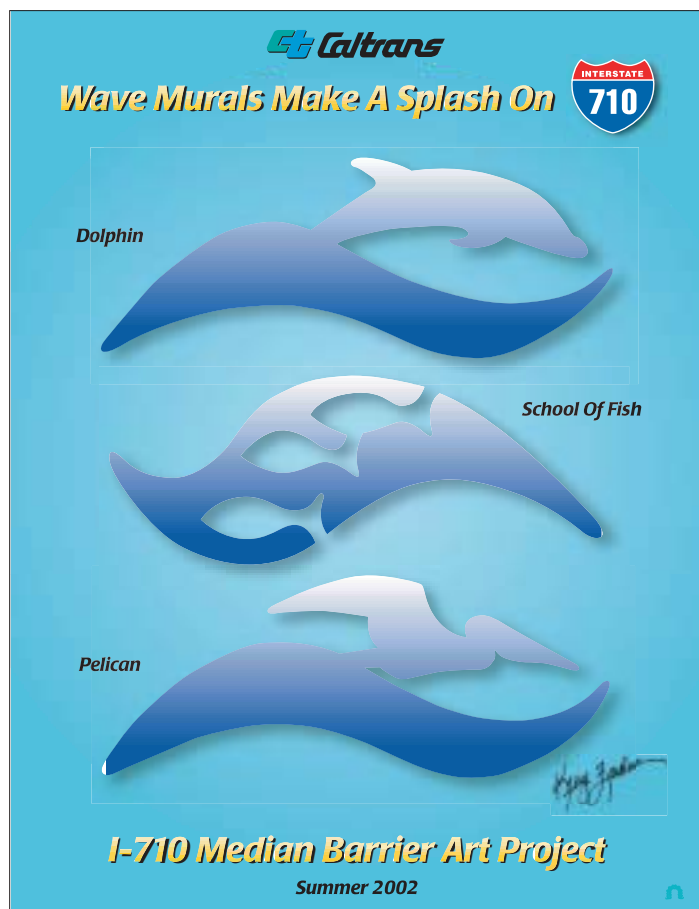
possible to make a difference in local communities and to enhance the quality of life for our customers."

Secretary Contreras-Sweet thanked the local partners — the City of Long Beach and the Public Corporation for the Arts in Long Beach — for their support in making the project a reality. The Public Corporation for the Arts hired Kerry Zarders, a Long Beach artist, to create the graphic designs for the new I-710 medians. Caltrans hired Western Sandblasting of Santa Ana to sandblast 200 images of ocean waves and various sea life onto both directions of new, concrete median.

The freeway mural project is part of a \$16.7-million rehabilitation of a 2.5-mile section of I-710 that is currently underway. The unique, pilot project is a joint effort between Caltrans and the asphalt paving industry and marks the first large-scale use of long-life asphalt on a major California freeway. Caltrans plans to continue adding freeway murals on future I-710 construction projects that are in the works within the City of Long Beach to the south and north of this project. •



A worker sandblasts art images to the median of the I-710 freeway in Long Beach, the first project of its kind on the Long Beach Freeway.



Monica Murillo, District 7 Graphic Artist, designed this mural depicting ocean waves and sea life that have been sandblasted onto the median of the Long Beach (I-710) Freeway.



"We are in great shape!" exclaimed Raja Mitwasi, Deputy District Director for Program and Project Management, when asked about that status of Caltrans District 7 project delivery for the 2001/2002 fiscal year. District 7 came in second place statewide behind the central region with 94% of its projects delivered on time and within budget. "Considering what we have gone through in the last fiscal year — loss of overtime, relocations, telecommuting and space constraints due to construction of the new District Office Building — it's a big accomplishment," said Mitwasi. "In spite of all the obstacles and challenges, District 7 came

through and shined again!"

Mitwasi sent special congratulations to the staff members responsible for 100% delivery of the Project Acceptance and Environmental Documents phase, taking first place statewide for the second year in a row. Also, he said that Construction personnel improved their delivery tremendously, helping the District in these efforts.

"Again," concluded Mitwasi, "Project Management is very active and very healthy at District 7. My sincere thanks to each and every employee who contributed to make District 7 one of the top Districts in project delivery statewide!" •



## PECG Donates \$10,000 To Caltrans Employee Wellness Center

This very generous \$10,000 donation from Professional Engineers in California Government (PECG), being handed over to District Director Doug Failing and Deputy District Director for Administration Bob Dennis, is to purchase new exercise equipment for the upcoming Wellness Center that will be housed in the new District Office Building. "PECG wholeheartedly supports an on-site Wellness Center because healthy and fit employees not only feel better about themselves, but have less absences due to illnesses and are generally more productive workers," said PECG Director Art Salazar. "The Wellness Center will be a most welcome addition to our future workplace." Left to right: Stephen Beck, PECG Labor Consultant; Doug Failing, District 7 Director; Sa'ad Issa, PECG President, Los Angeles Chapter; Art Salazar, PECG Director, Los Angeles Chapter; and Bob Dennis, Deputy District Director, Administration. •

## Director's Zone

*continued from page 2*

Caltrans is committed. We have integrity and we work together as teams to make these things happen. Those are the things I hope you will share with your friends and your neighbors. It helps drive home the commitment and integrity we at Caltrans have.

What Caltrans is doing, we're doing well. And as good as Caltrans is, we have to get better. We have to get better and challenge ourselves. I know Caltrans employees work hard. You do your jobs very well and that's all I'm ever going to ask. That is who I am. Because I work for Caltrans and I am very proud of that. And I'll be working hard doing my best for you. •

**DOUGLAS R. FAILING**  
District Director



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Caltrans Maintenance Worker Andy Madison "gears up" for his Leukemia and Lymphoma Society Treasure Island Triathlon in San Francisco. Madison is raising money to help fight the deadly disease.

## Caltrans Maintenance Worker Swims, Bikes And Runs For Leukemia

Similar to the Caltrans "HEART-WALK" in which Caltrans employees raised money for the American Heart Association, Caltrans Maintenance Worker Andy Madison is raising money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society at the Treasure Island Triathlon in San Francisco on November 2. The triathlon will include swimming 1.5 km (0.9 miles) in the Pacific Ocean, biking 40 km (24.8 miles) through the streets of San Francisco and topping this all off with a 10 km (6.2 mile) run. Andy will sponsor a local child as his honored teammate — a twelve-year-old boy named Matthew Whitaker who was diagnosed with Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia (ALL) when he was only four years old. It is estimated that leukemia and its related cancers will strike over 100,000 Americans this year. Every week some 1,100 people die from the disease. Leukemia is the number one fatal disease of children, yet it affects ten times as many adults. To participate or help Andy in this worthwhile effort by a sponsorship or donation, call him at (310) 292-9286. Checks can also be made out to: Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and mailed to 3436 Jasmine Avenue #4, Los Angeles, CA 90034.

Good luck, Andy! •



Mr. Douglas Failing, District 7 Director

Dear Mr. Failing:

I am writing to you concerning the construction of the soundwall along the freeway between the Cahuenga Boulevard undercrossing and the Odin Street undercrossing and, in particular, the landscaping on the west side of the wall and mature Cypress, palm and other trees that lie on the east side of the soundwall. I am writing to let you know how pleased I have been with the professionalism and commitment of Scott Sylvan, the Resident Engineer. After contacting you last December, I heard from Scott immediately. Although some of the mature trees were removed for access, Mr. Sylvan went to great lengths to make sure that no additional trees were removed. When I called or wrote to Mr. Sylvan regarding design changes for the wall and how those changes impacted the Cypress trees, Mr. Sylvan was responsive to my concerns. I truly appreciate his dedication. Also, because I live directly in front of the soundwall, I have seen the Caltrans, Peterson-Chase and Reycon workers on a daily basis since January. My contact with all of these individuals has been pleasant. All have been cooperative, friendly and courteous (i.e., making sure I can access my garage). The soundwall is almost complete and I have been told that landscaping on both sides of the wall, as well as replacement of the removed trees, will commence shortly (per your previous letter — thank you). I hope I am not jumping the gun when I say congratulations to you

and all of your colleagues for a job well done. Thank you.

Lisa Baker Morgan  
Los Angeles

Mr. Nate Cradle, South Region Maintenance Manager

Dear Mr. Cradle:

I wanted to take a moment to say "thank you!" It is easy to complain, but quite often hard to give praise. I want to commend you and your staff for their professionalism. The entire crew was polite, respectful, helpful and just overall fantastic. The quick response to my initial complaint did not go unnoticed. I was so very pleased with the outcome. I didn't anticipate the attention to detail in their cleanup and removal. My property was in fantastic shape once they were done with their work...Once again, thank you so much.

Dionne Thomas  
Long Beach

## Obituaries

Caltrans is saddened at the recent passing of the following retirees:

**Fred Correa**, *Retired Civil Engineer,*  
38 years of state service

**Bob Ramey**, *Retired Deputy District Director,*  
40+ years of state service

Our most sincere condolences and thoughts go out to the families of these dedicated former employees who will be missed by all who knew them.

## Failing

*continued from page 1*

Following the devastating Northridge earthquake of January 17, 1994, Failing was placed in the forefront of the recovery effort. He and his staff delivered three of the four major freeway rebuilding contracts — all in record time — using the first-ever cost-plus-time method to complete the competitive bidding process. Failing oversaw the earthquake reconstruction of the Golden State Freeway (I-5) at Gavin Canyon; the Santa Monica Freeway (I-10) at La Cienega/Fairfax and Venice/Washington; and the interchange projects at the Golden State (I-5) and the Antelope Valley (14) Freeways.

The son of Jim and Pat, and a native of Grayling Michigan, Failing graduated from Grayling High School in 1975 and earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from Michigan Technological University in 1980. He was hired at Caltrans as a Junior Civil Engineer in June, 1980.

Failing is a Registered Civil Engineer in the State of California and was an Executive Board member of the Institute for the Advancement of Engineering (IAE) and past-president of the IAE College of Fellows. These non-profit educational corporations help to inform the public of the role of engineering in advancing human welfare. The College of Fellows annually awards scholarships to deserving undergraduate engineering students. Failing is also a member of the Order of Engineers and Professional Engineers in California Government.

Reading is among Failing's favorite hobbies and in his spare time he volunteers as a trustee of the Arcadia Education Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to raising funds for the purpose of supporting the public school system. He resides in Arcadia with his wife and two children. •

## What's Cookin' At *Caltrans*

### HONORABLE RECIPES

From the *Internet Cookbook of 1st Traveler's Choice* at [www.virtualcities.com](http://www.virtualcities.com)

#### THE HONORABLE GRAY DAVIS' LEMON CHICKEN

*Governor, California*

- 4 boneless chicken breasts, skinned
- Juice of one lemon
- 1 Tablespoon flour
- Juice of one orange
- 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- 1 Tablespoon cornstarch
- Salt and pepper
- 2 Tablespoons fresh parsley, roughly chopped
- 1 cup chicken or vegetable stock
- Sliced almonds for garnish

Salt and pepper chicken. Dust lightly with flour. Heat oil in non-stick fry pan. Sauté chicken over medium heat until brown, about 5 minutes each side. Add stock, lemon juice and orange juice. Salt and pepper to taste. Remove chicken from pan and place on decorative plate. Whisk in cornstarch to thicken sauce. Add parsley. Pour sauce over chicken. Garnish with almonds. Serve with white rice and steamed asparagus and enjoy!

#### THE HONORABLE HENRY A. WAXMAN'S APPLE CAKE

*United States Congressman, California*

- 2 cups peeled/diced or canned apple slices
- 1 beaten egg
- 1/2-1 cup sugar, depending on tartness of apples
- 1 cup flour
- 3/4 cup safflower oil
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 cup currants, plumped in water
- Grated orange rind to taste

Place apples and sugar in a bowl. Let stand 1/2 hour or more. Add and mix together oil, egg, flour, cinnamon, salt, vanilla, baking soda, walnuts and currants. Bake at about 350 degrees in well-greased 8-inch pan for 45 minutes or until inserted toothpick comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes.



IS PUBLISHED BY THE  
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
DISTRICT 7 • EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION  
120 SOUTH SPRING STREET • ROOM 100  
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PHOTOGRAPHY ..... CALTRANS  
PRINTING ..... INTAGLIO

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